

male of the least frigate bird by the white patches under the wings and other characteristics as described by Ali and Ripley (1978) and Tuck and Heinzel (1980). Abdulali (1960) has discounted Ferguson's (1904) record as uncertain, though Ali (1970) and Faizi (1985) have included it as a record. To put the records straight, there are three previous records from India: an adult male (Abdulali 1960), a juvenile (Ali 1970, Faizi 1985). The present is the fourth

for India. These records made in June and early July coincide with the south-west monsoon, indicating that the high speed monsoon winds probably sweep these vagrants to our western coast.

Prof. R.M. Naik and Taej Mundkur commented on an earlier draft.

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9. GLOSSY IBIS *PLEGADIS FALCINELLUS* (LINN.) AND PAINTED STORK *MYCTERIA LEUCOCEPHALA* (PENNANT): TWO MORE ADDITIONS TO THE BIRD LIST OF KERALA

On 8 November 1987, we were observing a group of about 60 cattle egrets *Bubulcus ibis* feeding in an uncultivated paddy field at Kattampally, a wetland near Cannanore. A dark coloured curlew-like bird among the egrets attracted our attention. Its upperparts were chestnut in colour and the tail black. The long, down-curved bill and legs were also dark. From the feathered head and the absence of white colour on the body, we identified the bird as a glossy ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*. After some time, a marsh harrier *Circus aeruginosus* glided overhead and the whole group took off. The cattle egrets settled near us while the glossy ibis circled overhead for several minutes. Its rounded wings and chestnut underparts could be observed clearly. On 28 October 1987, one of us (C. S.) had observed seven birds of this species in flight near the same place, which could not be identified at that time. This species has never been reported from Kerala before.

The Parassinikadavu Snake Park about 13 km from

Cannanore has, apart from snakes, a collection of several wild animals and birds, most of them donated by people all over Cannanore and Kasaragod districts of north Kerala. On hearing of the arrival of a rare bird at the Park, we visited it on 26 January 1988. The bird turned out to be a painted stork *Mycteria leucocephala*. It had been found in a paddy field in Eramam village, about 30 km north of Cannanore, in the first week of January 1988. The bird being uncommon, the villagers caught and handed it over to the Snake Park. Though very weak and probably injured when it was brought to the Park, the bird seemed to be recuperating on a diet of fish, frogs etc. This species also is being reported from Kerala for the first time.

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April 4, 1989

10. A STRANGE PREDATORY HABIT OF THE PARIAH KITE *MILVUS MIGRANS*

We were watching birds along the banks of the Kudamuruti, a branch of the Uyyakondon Canal of the Cauvery river, in the early morning on 29 April 1989. More than ten male baya weaver birds *Ploceus philippinus* were making nests in a male palmyra tree. The nests were in different stages of construction. A pariah kite *Milvus*

migrans glided to the vicinity of the nest tree and all the bayas, alarmed, flew to nearby plantain and other trees. The predator seemed unconcerned with the adult nest builders. Thrice it circled the tree, turned each time upside down and clung on with its talons to a partially built nest with wings spread. It selected only those nests whose egg